

# ugvm

The Official [uk.games.video.misc](http://uk.games.video.misc) Magazine

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**Super  
Mario  
Sunshine**



## Inside

LIFE OF THE DC  
Dreamcast memories

JIGGLYPUFF IS CRAP  
Find out why

TOP REVIEWS  
All bases covered

SEAMAN DIARY  
Something fishy

**Issue 1**

# ugvm

...was brought to you today by the letters D and K, and by the number 9. **ugvm** is not a production of The Children's Television Workshop. Thank God.

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## Issue 1

# Welcome



Welcome to the very first issue of **ugvm** magazine! A magazine written by regulars of the Usenet newsgroup **uk.games.video.misc** (where we get our name from). A magazine written for the population of the world in general, but for those who populate ugvm in particular. A magazine set to fill the holes that so many other online and paper-based video game magazines have left behind.

ugvm hopes to provide you, noble reader, with some proper fan-based video game loveliness. Articles which other magazines don't cover. Reviews from actual real-life games players. More nonsense than you can shake a Star Rod at. And plenty of everything - we don't discriminate the old from the new. We know that you play on your old SNES as well as your XBox. We know you prefer Kick Off 2 to the crap that is FIFA 2002. We know you want games that play well, and not just games that look good. **We know.**

In this issue you'll find a documentary on the lifetime of the Sega Dreamcast. You'll also see a review of one of the most eagerly anticipated games ever - **Super Mario Sunshine**. And who could miss our Brothers at War (Jigglypuff Is Crap) feature? Add all this to our soon-to-be regulars, and you have a pretty nifty read on your hands. Or your screen...

**deKay (Editor)**

## What's Inside This Issue...



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## Review Scores Explained

**ugvm** uses a marks-out-of-5 system for scoring games in the reviews. We feel that percentage systems are silly, with there being little difference between, say 75 and 76%. Marks out of 10 are often pointless as well, as very rarely do games score under 5 or 6/10. Having 5 points to the scale lets us get down to the nitty-gritty: is this game any good, or is it just a pile of old pants?

You can think of the scores as being roughly equivalent to these simple to digest phrases:

**1/5 - "Not even worth a look"**

**2/5 - "Only think about it if you're a real fan of this type of game"**

**3/5 - "Average. Probably still playable, but not the best of it's kind"**

**4/5 - "A good game, perhaps with just one or two minor flaws"**

**5/5 - "You need to own this game. Now."**

## Awards

Games which score 4/5 also gain the coveted **ugvm Silver Award**, and games achieving the top marks of 5/5 are awarded the even more fantastic **ugvm Gold Award**. These awards are to show that these games really are something you want to play.



## Comment

# Toys Aren't Us

**Tim Miller** has a Gameboy and isn't afraid to use it

In recent years, those looking for games consoles in the Argos catalogue have had to turn to a section just before or after the TVs and DVD players. Games consoles have, in the catalogue's eyes, become another piece of electronic equipment, instead of the toys that they were listed next to before.

But it's not always been this way, and it's still not this way in the eyes of many people. Games consoles are, to them, toys. They are for children, they are an inferior form of entertainment, and they are for those with limited intellect. They stifle the imagination, and they have no worth. Gamers are spotty boys who sit in their bedrooms and shun social activity.

Gaming is becoming more 'acceptable', though. Newspapers carry features on it, even going so far as to carry it in their business pages. The Guardian, in particular, has well-researched articles and reviews of new games, in its 'Guide' section. Even lad's mags, such as FHM and Maxim, are no longer afraid to have a page on videogames. Yet the media still seems to sneer on our hobby, as if it's socially deviant. You still get the occasional odd look when playing with your Gameboy on the train.

There's only one possible response ... stand up for yourself. Let the world know that you're a gamer and that you're normal. Leave copies of ugvm lying around your workplace. Let people know that when they start gaming in the near future, that you got there first.

And they're not toys. They're games.

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Each issue, **ugvm** will be looking at a console from the past. There's no way that anyone could possibly hope to own each and every gaming machine ever released - not even the BFI's got there yet, and they've been trying for years. This article should carry a health warning therefore: reading about other consoles could seriously damage your wallet.

# Dream a Little Dream of Me

This issue, **Tim Miller** looks at Sega's last ever entry into the hardware market.

October 1999: the thirteenth, to be precise, at about quarter to midnight. Crowds gather in Oxford Street, in London, to see Chris Eubank driving a lorry up the road. That, and to be among the first to buy into Sega's vision of a next-generation console. The Dreamcast. More powerful than anything that had gone before, capable of so much more than could be imagined. It came with a ready Internet connection, with a miniature handheld console which doubled as the memory card, with some of the best launch games ever. It was set to be an astounding console. It had a bright future.

In retrospect, of course, this wasn't quite true. Its "bright future" lasted all of two years, before it was discontinued by Sega. The last games came out in the UK on April 26, 2002 (although there's still a couple of releases due in Japan). So what went wrong?

## Beyond Saturn

After the sales failure of Sega's Saturn, Sega weren't particularly well off. They'd lost quite a lot of money when they were forced to reduce the retail price of the Saturn, and a lot of the third-party publishers weren't interested in Sega's console after the first year or two. Sega was selling the console at a loss, and not getting much back in terms of licensing fees on new games. Sega needed their new console to be a success.

Rumours floated around of what the console would be called. Black belt? Katana? It was being developed in Japan. It was being developed in America. It would use a PowerVR chip. It would use a 3Dfx chip. Saturn's successor was a mysterious beast indeed, but the cause

of this confusion was that all rumours were true. Sega had two separate teams working on two separate consoles. The better was chosen, and named "Dreamcast".

The Dreamcast was released in Japan to a warm welcome, in Spring 1999. It had some pretty dire launch games, but it sold out almost straight away. It entered the market with no competition other than Sony's four-year-old Playstation and Nintendo's three-year-old N64. It had the market to itself, in effect.

The Dreamcast was released in the US to an even warmer welcome, in September 1999. The games had been developed since the Japanese launch, and the launch line-up included some stunning games (Sonic Adventure, Sega Rally 2 and Virtua Fighter 3tb were the biggest in-house names). The future looked rosy. The European launch went off with a bang too. 200,000 consoles were sold in three days.

## Life is a Rollercoaster

Sales soon began to slow down. After those that had been waiting for the machine since it was first announced, Sega needed to sell the machine to those that were only marginally interested. At this time, there were millions of new gamers who'd been introduced to the scene by Sony, and who used the word 'Playstation' as a generic term for a console. Sega had to sell the Dreamcast to these people, but they didn't. People continued to buy the Playstation, especially after the price was reduced.

Instead of running an advert saying "Dreamcast: everything the Playstation can do, but better", Sega's advertising agency in the UK decided to run some obscure adverts concentrating on people competing against each other. Sega of America went even further into obscurity, and ran adverts containing the Dreamcast's swirl logo in various situations. People didn't know what the Dreamcast was. People didn't buy it.

The games certainly weren't the problem. After launch, Sega continued to bring out top-quality games at regular intervals, and third-party publishers had jumped back on board. Sega had reduced the burdens placed on developers, and had produced a console that was very easy to program for. The results that developers got out of the machine were astonishing. Soul Calibur, by

## Further Contacts

<http://www.washu.clara.co.uk> - the FAQ for uk.games.video.dreamcast

(02380) 623200 - Big Ben Interactive's phone number. BBI were the official distributor for Dreamcast games for the last few months of the machine's life, and sell off ex-demonstration games for £5 or £10 each.

<http://www.dcemulation.com> - details of what you can do with your Dreamcast other than just playing Dreamcast games

# Play My Game

With the last games for the Dreamcast on the horizon, Steve Jackson ran a poll on [uk.games.video.dreamcast](http://uk.games.video.dreamcast) to find the most loved games for Sega's machine. The results are pretty representative of which are the best games available. In reverse order:

## 10: Metropolis Street Racer

Bizarre Creations brought this game out about a year late. Race a realistic car around London, San Francisco or Tokyo - and not just a rough approximation, either. Great fun, and technically amazing.



## 9: Shenmue 2

The follow-up to one of the most groundbreaking games of all time. Some improved gameplay ideas, combined with a longer, more involving story, gives this game an entirely new feel to it.

## 8: Samba de Amigo

The most expensive Dreamcast game, since it included a set of maracas in the box. Watch the screen and shake your maracas in the position indicated. If you don't smile, there's something wrong with you.



## 7: Rez

Sega attempted to do something different with this shooter; add music. As you shoot the enemies, you create tones and jingles which add to the overall ambience.

## 6: Skies of Arcadia

Possibly the finest RPG ever? Well, no, but it's certainly among the finest. A huge game, with you as a pirate sailing around the sky. It'll last you ages.

## 5: Crazy Taxi

One of Sega's best arcade games, ever. Pick up a passenger, take them to their destination, repeat until time runs out. Simple, but stunningly addictive.

## 4: Jet Set Radio

Not the first cel-shaded game (that honour goes to Wacky Races), but an amazingly original platformer. Skate and grind around the levels and graffiti your tag on the walls. And on your rivals. And on the policemen.



## 3: Soul Calibur

Beautiful to look at, perfectly balanced to play. Namco's 3D fighter remains the high point of graphical achievement, and boasts almost perfect gameplay to match.



## 2: Shenmue

You're placed in a world in which you can interact with almost everything. Search through drawers, play games in the arcade, feed the cat. And when you get bored of that, there's a deeply involving story to follow.



## 1: Phantasy Star Online

Join up to three other gamers online to cooperate as you fight through the levels of Ragol, a distant planet where something's gone wrong. This game has eaten up huge chunks of people's lives. This game will make you love it. This game has no equal.



Namco, remains one of the best-looking console games ever. Powerstone is an arcade-perfect conversion that works even better at home. Resident Evil: Code Veronica improved on the format of the Playstation original games immensely. The problem was that nobody knew about them.

Sony did their best to make sure things stayed this way.

Every time a new game was released, Sony leaked more details about their forthcoming Playstation 2. The mainstream media didn't want to know about the Dreamcast, they wanted to report on Sony's new machine which would be capable of "Toy Story graphics". Sega had lost their chance to sell to the mass market.

Sega continued to lose money, through their expensive

## Feature

game production studios and the Dreamcast's low price (it was launched at £200, but fell to £150, £100, £100 including three games, and lately £50). Amazing games continued to be released (Shenmue, the most expensive game ever produced; Samba de Amigo, complete with maracas; Phantasy Star Online, the first real online console RPG), but those that had been brought up on the Playstation weren't interested. Sega was going to go bankrupt.

Instead, Sega announced that they were discontinuing the Dreamcast, and were going to be producing games for other consoles. They were out of the hardware market, and started to write games as a third-party publisher. The Dreamcast's life was over.

### Dead, I Tell You!

In a way, that's true. But a machine's never truly dead until it doesn't work any more, and this certainly isn't true of the Dreamcast. You can still buy a Dreamcast in many HMV and Game shops, for the price of £50. Games are still available. And it's still worth buying.

The games line-up for the Dreamcast is arguably the best for any console, ever (recent threads on ugvn fluctuate between the Dreamcast and SNES). See the boxout "Play My Game" for details of some of the best, but this isn't a definitive list. Everyone has their own favourites, and almost all games can be bought for a pittance nowadays. This is bargain gaming at its finest.

The games for the Dreamcast aren't dead, either. Many of the games which have been available for it are now finding their way to other consoles. For example, Crazy Taxi has been released on the Xbox, Playstation 2, and Gamecube. F355 is about to be released on PS2. Skies of Arcadia is a forthcoming Gamecube title. Many of the Dreamcast's key titles have sequels released on other consoles as well - Jet Set Radio Future on the Xbox is a fine game indeed.

And finally, there are still a lot of releases for the Dreamcast, in the homebrew arena. Hobbyists have

## Shake It, Baby!

The Dreamcast had some ... interesting peripherals. Here's a list:

The Mouse - used for playing Quake 3 Arena initially, but used in other games since. It's a good gaming mouse, with three buttons and a wheel



The Keyboard - essential for PSO, and for browsing the Internet

The Controller - not the best ever, but with a few innovations, such as the expansion ports



The VMU - a memory card with screen and controls, so you could play downloaded games on the move. The battery life was too short to be effective, though

The Fishing Rod - added to Sega Bass Fishing in quite a big way



The Maracas - essential to get the most out of Samba de Amigo

The Microphone - released with Seaman, a game where you talked to a fish



The Steering Wheel - but no pedals, unfortunately

The Rumble Pack - pretty much the same as all other Rumble Packs, this bit of kit vibrates to let you "feel" the game



The Virtual On Dual Joysticks - There is no other sensible way to control this Cyborg fighting game! It's just like the arcade

ported across Doom and Quake, and the Dreamcast is capable of emulating a host of older machines, up to and including the SNES. There was even a commercial emulator released for three Playstation games - Bleemcast. You can get MP3, VCD and DivX players, and can use the Dreamcast as a Linux terminal. You could even use it as a tool to plant a virus on a company's network - but of course you wouldn't.

The Dreamcast hasn't got a rosy future. But it's certainly not black.



# Brothers at War

## Smash Characters...



### Marth

My personal favourite, but you can't get him until you've completed the game a few times as he isn't available from the start. He's from an old Famicom (the Japanese NES) RPG called Fire Emblem, and comes armed with a sword. He doesn't have many 'fancy' moves, like Mario's fireballs and such, but he does have speed on his side, isn't

too slippery on the platforms, and most of all has a pretty long reach with his sharp metal stick. He can jump pretty high and far, doesn't have much of a recovery time after a missed lunge, and has a nifty charge-up move, which can unleash huge damage provided he gets the chance. This move alone will win you almost every Sudden Death decider! Marth's only downside is that, this move aside, he's pretty weak. Don't let that put you off though, as he can strike and run before the opponent can blink. Oh, and change his costume to white and you could almost pass him off as Elvis!

### Link/Young Link

There's not a great deal to choose between these two characters. It's mostly down to which one you like the look of most. In many ways, he's similar to Marth, but doesn't have quite the reach and lacks the charge move. He does have a boomerang for long range attacks (although it is difficult to aim in the heat of battle) and can chuck bombs at will. This attack is great for knocking the enemy out of the arena, but you can end up killing yourself with it if you don't let go of it in time, or it rebounds back at you. Link also has a grappling hook which can be used to drag fighters towards him or the edge of platforms. Again though, he isn't very powerful.



When it comes to fighting, **deKay** is the first to hide under the table. In SSB:M, who should do the same?

### Kirby

I went through phases with Kirby. He was the first character I chose, and I hung on to him for a while. I got attached to his hammer and heavy drop (which can do loads of damage) moves, and thought he couldn't be beaten. And then I found Marth and we got married. After that, I had a bit of a fling with Kirby again, and realised that although not as good as I first thought, he is still a versatile fighter. This was partly furthered by my discovery of another use for his swallow-the-enemy move: knock your opponent around until their damage is more than 50%, and then suck them in. Now, rather than swallow them and borrow their moves (which is a bit gimmicky and useless anyway), carry them to the edge of the arena and spit them out. A cunning move, for sure. Kirby's ability to fly is a huge asset too, and his sword move has a pretty long range. A downpoint is that he has a pause before unleashing most of his moves, giving time to be pummelled into oblivion.



### Other notables

MewTwo:

The best character to rack up huge combos with, and great for juggling your opponent. Its jump is a bit disorientating though.

Mr Game & Watch:

Powerful attacks, but several of them are a bit hit-and-miss (such as the sausage throwing one, where the aim is a bit random)

Donkey Kong:

His ground pound is ideal for the 100-man Melee, and his Smash Up+A move is great for striking from below.

# ...And Trash Characters

## Ice Climbers



The biggest problem with the Ice Climbers would at first glance appear to be the main asset - the fact that there are two of them. Twice the smashing! Twice the weaponry! Sounds great, doesn't it? However, two characters means two things to hit (and damage to Nana or Popo both count towards the damage percentage), and only Popo has to be knocked out of the arena in order for your game to be over. A further hassle is actually controlling the pair. Despite the fact they are different colours, and you only directly control Popo (the purple one), it is still difficult to stay focused. Your eyes keep being diverted to what Nana is up to, leaving you open to attack. A fatal flaw.

## Other Pros and Cons

### Mario/Dr. Mario

Mario's upwards almost-dragon-punch type move is handy for knocking foes on platforms above you, and also for gaining a bit of extra distance when trying to get back to a platform once knocked off. His cape move is difficult to time, and therefore pretty useless.

### Luigi

Similar to Mario, but doesn't have the jump distance, which can prove fatal. Luckily, he has a launch-forwards, head-first move which gains a fair bit of ground, although sometimes too much. It looks stupid too!

### Ganondorf

Very strong, and best character for the Home Run contest as a result. Sadly, he's too slow to be much use in a fight, as although his charge move is very powerful, you never get time to use it.

### Jigglypuff

The worst of the poor. Think Kirby without the good bits. I'll get the good, erm, point over with first. Jigglypuff can jump high and far, meaning he can recover back to a platform even if smashed a long distance. And that's it. Everything else about him is pants. He has no power in his attacks. His moves are short range. Because Jigglypuff is a 'puffball', he is very light, and so gets knocked a fair way even with a relatively weak attack. Yet, despite being light, he isn't very fast and appears quite sluggish. One of the worst points is his 'roll around the ground' move, which is barely controllable and if you activate it by accident (which is likely) you'll struggle to keep him on a platform as he seems to gain a lemming-like cliff diving fetish. And you die. Again.



### Other useless crap

Pichu:

Pretty much the same as Pikachu, but without the power or control

Captain Falcon

He moves too fast, and you break into a run too easily with him as a result. Over the edge you go!

Yoshi:

Suffers from the same stupid 'roll-along-the-floor' move as Jigglypuff, but at least the rest of his moves are OK. He sounds like he's straining for a poo most of the time, however.

### Pikachu

His lightning from the sky move is handy in close combat, especially with multiple foes nearby, and it takes out aerial attackers too. It's just a shame none of his other attacks are powerful enough to make him formidable.

### Peach

Too slow, too floaty. And just WHERE does she produce Toad from? At least she can float for miles if knocked out of the arena.

### Zelda

Pretty much useless as Zelda, but not bad at all as Shiva. My advice is to change into Shiva at the start of a fight, and never change back!

### Bowser

He has some great throwing moves, and his fire breath move is handy for keeping foes at bay. Like Ganondorf, however, his slow speed makes him difficult to use.





# Crazy Taxi

Are you ready to spend some crazy money?  
**Tim Miller** isn't... not yet, anyway.

Crazy Taxi started life as a small, unpretentious arcade game. It didn't have a bike to sit on. It didn't have guns attached to the front of it. It didn't have three screens side-by-side, and a leather racing seat. It just had a steering wheel, a gearstick, and if you were lucky, a bar to put your bum on. And inside its circuits, one of the best games ever made.

The idea of Crazy Taxi is quite simple - you have to pick up a passenger, take them to where they want to go, and repeat. Each time you do, you get a time bonus. When your time runs out, it's game over. You have to collect as much money as you can get.

Such a simple idea, but it's superbly executed. Once you've started up the game and started playing, you'll firstly be struck by the graphics - they're bright, colourful, sharp and clear. They move fast, and there's little slowdown or pop-up (on the GC and PC versions there's none at all; on the DC it's only noticeable in 60Hz mode, and on the PS2 it's only annoying very occasionally). The music's also distinctive, featuring a couple of Offspring tracks and another two from Bad Religion.

After the first couple of minutes, though, you'll not be thinking of the graphics and sound, but of the gameplay. It's superbly fun to play, especially since your taxi can't be damaged. You can plough into cars, trams, lorries and buildings, and you'll bounce off. Cars can be overturned, pedestrians will run out the way (with cries of "watch it!" and "hey!"), and you'll be sitting there either giggling, or feeling frustrated because you want to go down the now-blocked road. It costs time to go around.

Time's not the only reason you want to avoid hitting other

## Moving On Up

Your taxi has two gears - forward ('drive') and reverse. It can turn corners. Is that it? Oh no.

**Crazy Dash:** press drive, then hold accelerate. You have to do this in very quick sequence. Your taxi will have a sudden increase in speed.

**Crazy Drift:** hold the direction you want to turn in, then press reverse, then press drive. Your taxi will let the back drift out.

**Limit Cut:** while moving forward, press reverse, wait for the engine to change note, press drive then hold accelerate. Similar to the Crazy Dash, but you go a lot faster.

## Monthly Bonuses

You get a bit of extra money for driving skilfully. Skilfully doesn't mean that you've got to indicate at every junction, however...

**Crazy Through:** the easiest bonus to get. Drive close to, but not touching, another car or truck

**Crazy Jump:** Hit a ramp and catch some air.

**Crazy Drift:** slide round more than 90°, using either a crazy drift move, or just naturally

**Crazy Combo:** perform more than one of these moves in succession, without hitting anything, and you'll get a multiple of the bonus. The best way to get your score up.

things. By avoiding collisions, and performing tricks, you can get large payouts from your passengers for giving them a thrilling ride.

It's an arcade-perfect conversion, then, but it's more than that. Included on the disc is a whole new game, of sorts - basically, an additional map for you to drive around. It's not as refined as the arcade map, but this "original" map has quite a few secret bits hidden within it.

Not only that, but there's another game mode in the Crazy Box. This consists of nine little tasks which you have to complete - jumping as far as possible, drifting around corners, and so on. Complete these and you can unlock more difficult challenges. Complete these... I won't spoil it for you. It's certainly not a game you'll "finish" in a week.

There's a downside, though, for some of the versions - the cost. Each version of the game is more or less identical, which doesn't bode well when one version costs eight times that of another. Indeed, you could probably get a Dreamcast plus Crazy Taxi for the same price as the game itself on GC. The only difference lies in the little bit of slowdown that appears (the graphics themselves are exactly the same from the least powerful machine to the most powerful) and the fact that Acclaim had to use different (weaker) voices for the non-Dreamcast versions. So when looking to buy the game - and believe me, you do want it - bear this in mind.



# Super Mario Sunshine

Slapping on some sunscreen and digging out a natty pair of shades, **Alastair Foster** joins Mario in paradise...

I have to admit to being a bit of a Mario fanboy. Being a huge Nintendo fan since the NES days I have to consider myself to be a bit of a Mario veteran. Therefore, I was very excited by the fact that finally a true sequel to Mario 64 was coming out. Looking at the first videos made me think about playing Mario 64 for the first time, and how fun it was. I tried to keep myself spoiler free, but failed miserably. Hype was taking over, and when you hype yourself up about a game then it usually fails to live up to your expectations. Sadly, in some ways, Super Mario Sunshine was one of these games.

The best way to describe the game as many people have pointed out before is Mario 64 on steroids. The basic controls are very similar, and it looks like a hi-res version of the game. The main thing that people seem to complain about is the graphics. In my opinion, they are excellent. Although not exactly stretching the Gamecube's capabilities, it's Mario! I don't expect Mario to jump around a level that looks like something out of Halo. The graphics suit the cartoony nature of the game, and the water is possibly the best looking water in video game history. Even beating water



based games like Wave Race! Although there are some very ugly textures, the draw distance more than makes up for it. Seeing all the way across the level watching all the baddies walking around is a sight to behold.

All the old skool Mario tunes







are back with a new remixes. There is some nice surround effects in the rear speakers. I don't have Dolby Pro Logic 2 but even in plain old DPL1 it was nice enough!

And the game is fun - pure fun! Jumping around with your water pack and flying across the levels. Even doing nothing is fun in this game. Despite being fun, the game is joystick-throwingly hard in some places. The game's difficulty level is definitely not suitable for kids, despite Nintendo's kiddy image and Super Mario Sunshine's cartoon graphics.

In terms of game length it is roughly comparable to Mario 64, I managed to finish it with 70 shines. Although I understand completing it depends on which shines you get rather than how many.



The impressions I give so far are very positive, so why am I slightly disappointed with it? Well, for a start there are not enough levels, with only 7 in the game. The biggest travesty of them all is the lack of snow or desert levels! I know they are platformer cliches, but I really enjoy them. Since the whole game is set in happy sunny places, which although fits the location of a tropical island doesn't allow for as much visual variety as Mario 64. I'm

sure they could have made an excuse for a level to be snow filled, but sadly not.

My other gripe was the way the game was much more linear than Mario 64. Instead of venturing into the level and finding any star you like, the game sets you the task of finding a specific shine in the level and gives you a picture of where it is. For example in Mario 64 you could try for the star on top of the mountain. But on the way you see a star in a cave. You get sidetracked by the star in the cave, and get that one instead. In Sunshine there is one shine per course, per level you choose and you have to get them in order. So you have to get shine 1, 2, 3 etc. So if you get stuck getting shine 4 you can't try for shine 5. It may not sound like a huge problem but it limits the sense of freedom and exploration you have. You can't make

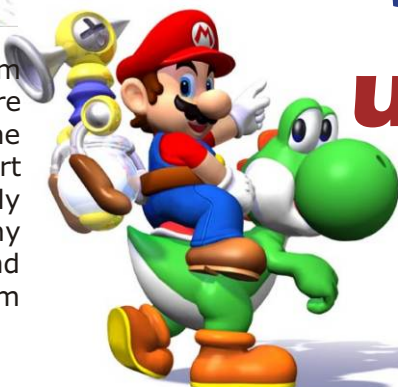


your own way through the level, you have to follow the set path. It's more like a set of skill tests now; Rocket jump here, bounce on the wire, spin jump onto the next platform.

Of course these faults are my opinion, I expect many of you will like this style. It's probably my own fault for expecting it to be structured like Mario 64. Don't let these things spoil the game for you though. This truly is a worthy sequel to Mario 64, and it flows with all the magic you would expect from Nintendo. Just don't expect it to revolutionise gaming like Mario 64 did. But then again... will another game ever 'do' a Mario 64?

5/5

ugvm







Got to catch them all. It doesn't have quite the same ring written in "proper" English, does it?

Pokemon, as a concept, is a great idea. There are 150 creatures, you have to collect every one of them. In the original pokemon games, you did this by playing a pretty large RPG game, using your own captured creatures to fight wild ones and capture them. In this game, you do this by, er, playing pinball.

There are two pinball tables - blue and red, in line with the first RPG games - and they're sufficiently different to retain interest for extended periods of time. There's a lot to do on each table, with bonus and field multipliers, bonus stages to play, and area moves vying for attention.



The main bit of the game is collecting pokemon, however.

This isn't an easy task;

you have to send the ball up the right side three times, then into the bellspout or shellder on the table. Then you have to hit the cluster of three pokemon at the top of the table six times, then hit the pokemon you're trying to catch at the bottom of the table four times. Despite the complexity of this (and don't worry, you are told in-game what to do), you'll soon collect a fair few pokemon with relative ease.

Once you've collected pokemon, you can evolve them through a similar process, and you'll need to do this a fair

few times if you want to collect all 150 creatures that are available (151, in fact, since Mew does show up from time to time). You'll also have to move around the map areas, since some pokemon are only found in specific places. Much like the RPG then.

If there's a fault to the game, it's that there are only two tables. Also, the ball (a pokeball) is a little too large, which means that it's not difficult to keep it in play, unless



# Pokémon Pinball

After days of researching dolphin mating calls, **Tim Miller** finds out it isn't that kind of Flipper...

it falls down a side gully in which case it's too difficult to tilt it back into play. The rumble feature's pretty worthless, and doesn't add much to the game, except making it not fit a GBA very well. And the key config is (necessarily) odd - you use the select button to tilt the table up.

But overall it's well worth the money, and will keep you occupied for ages. Especially if you're going to catch them all. No, still doesn't work.

**4/5**  
ugvm



# Luigi's Mansion

Who you gonna call? Please - not **Lister**, surely...

Cast your minds back to the late eighties for a moment. Remember Ghostbusters? Nintendo obviously did when they programmed this game.



The story starts off with Mario winning a mansion in a competition. What the prize letter neglects to mention though is that the mansion is haunted. Mario goes for a look at his mansion, and is

kidnapped by the ghosts, so it's up to his brother to save him.

Luigi's Mansion

borrows heavily from the Ghostbusters theme, and sees Luigi strapping a green vacuum called the Poltergust 2000 to his back and sucking up the ghosts, exactly like Egon, Ray, Winston and Peter did in the film. The game utilises all the buttons on the control pad, with Luigi being controlled by the analogue stick and the Poltergust 2000 being controlled by the c-stick. The control system can





The Japanese have a very strange sense of humour. It appears to be almost entirely pain or toilet based. They make some very strange video games, and Engacho takes on this bizarre humour to create one of the strangest and most disgusting puzzle games you are ever likely to play.

The basic puzzle idea behind the game is simple. You have a simple maze, and you have to reach the end. Four types of baddie get in your way however. They each move as you do, but in different ways. One moves in the same direction as you each step you take, another goes in the opposite direction. The other two move at a 90 degree angle to your direction, one anticlockwise and the other clockwise.

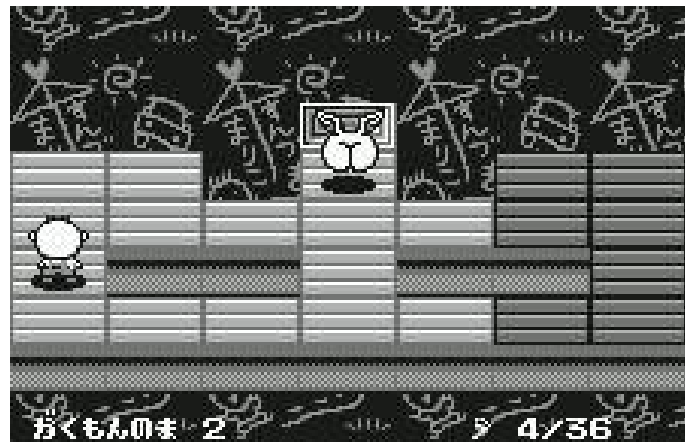
What this means is, you have to guide your little man (with a big head, tiny mouth and no nose) to the exit in such a way that the baddies don't walk into you, or block your path. Which isn't as simple as it sounds - since they all move each time you do!



So, why is it disgusting? Well, it's the baddies you see. When they walk into you, you're bumped off by them. Each one has a special way of killing you. The one with the long tongue slobbers you to death, the one with the runny nose snots all over you, the bloke with the VERY hairy armpits gases you to death with BO, and the flying arse? Well, try and guess.



The graphics and sound are fairly good, and the Wonderswan's poor quality



# Engacho!

Smelly armpits, a sticky tongue and a bad case of the trots? Sound's like **deKay** has had a night on the tiles...

screen doesn't affect the gameplay at all. There are 100 or so levels to work through, generally getting harder but with a few easier ones thrown in as a bit of a breather later on. As well as this, there's a player-vs-cpu mode, in which you and the computer both control little men, and the aim is to get one of the numerous baddies to walk into them.

Overall, a good and fairly original puzzle game, with a slightly sick theme.

4/5

ugvm



take a bit of getting used to, but once you get the hang of it, it becomes second nature.

The ghosts are then taken to the gallery, where the professor turns them into paintings to hang on the wall. This is the first game to star Luigi as it's main character

since the "edutainment" title "Mario is Missing", which came out over 6 years ago. The graphics and animation in this game are absolutely top notch, with a gentle nudge of the analogue stick seeing Luigi creeping around on tip toe, and a larger push sending him running.

The cut scenes are also brilliant, with a great close-up of Luigi's teeth chattering. One complaint about the game is that it is pretty easy, and the hardened player will complete it in about a week, but it's great fun along the way, and a decent purchase for anyone who likes a laugh - especially Ghostbusters fans.



4/5

ugvm







# Advance Wars

deKay finds something that fits in his hand that he can spend hours playing with

The latest in the series of Nintendo's "Wars" games, and the first to get an official release outside of Japan, Advance Wars is also the best so far.

Following on from GB Wars, Famicom Wars, N64 Wars et al, it places you in control of an army, which you must use to defeat the opposing armies over a multitude of campaigns.

Fights take place in a way similar to those in RPGs like Shining Force or Mystaria, in that they are turn-based, and the game map is made up of a grid. Not that Advance Wars is an RPG of course, as it isn't. Each unit has its own strengths and weaknesses (e.g. tanks are powerful, planes can move long distances, etc.), as does each type of terrain. In evenly matched battles, you can only gain the upper hand by superior use of the terrain. Mountains provide great cover for infantry troops, forests allow you to hide from the enemy in Fog of War situations, and your cities and bases allow your troops to recover energy each turn.

As well as the fighting, you can also take over bases and cities to gain more money each round, which you can use to build troops. Indeed, some levels are actually won by owning X many bases, or by taking command of the enemy HQ. Other missions require you to guard a particular unit, or survive for so many turns.

There is an immense depth to the game, and in one-player mode there is enough to keep you glued to your GBA for hours. To start with, there are a load of training

missions that show you strategies and how to use and deploy units, and then there is the Campaign - a "story mode" with 20+ levels.

As well as this, there are loads of one-off battle maps to play on, more of which become available as you progress through the Campaign mode. Add to that the ability to create and fight on your own maps too, and the different COs you can use to control your armies (each CO has a special ability, like being able to repair your units, or slow the progress of enemy units) each of which adds a different tactic to a level.

In fact, Campaign mode 'branches out' with different missions depending on your CO and how well you complete the missions. That means more levels!

Reply value is huge, since you are awarded a grade for each completed mission, so you can always go back to try and beat your score!

I haven't even mentioned the multiplayer modes yet - up to four players can play, either on one Gameboy (you pass it around for each go), or with more GBAs, with one game cartridge or one each. You can choose to play on the built-in maps, or the ones you create yourself. Literally weeks of fun!

You are quite simply missing out on one of the best games ever created if you do not own Advance Wars. Beware, however - it may take over a large proportion of your life!





Things change when we grow older and the pleasures of childhood can be bittersweet if revisited. Back in the 80's I loved the taste of Fanta, listened to the Bangles and played Galaga and Pacman at the arcade. Now I loathe the taste of Fanta, have to admit that the Bangles were not the girl band to end all girl bands and have moved on from Dig Dug to playing...Dig Dug on the Gameboy Advance. The more things change the more they stay the same. Namco Museum like its namesake on the PS1 contains just five of their greatest arcade games.

Pole Position is the great granddaddy of racing games. The aim is simple. Do a qualifying lap as quickly as



spices up the formula with bonus rounds and special ships with tractor beams that try to capture your ship. Shoot this ship down and you can retrieve your old ship giving you double firepower (while making you a larger target.) Again, the original vertical aspect is kept which means small ships and smaller bullets that can be hard to make out.

Galaxian, the father of Galaga and is quite dull in comparison. No bonus rounds or extras it seems rather redundant. Namco obviously feel the same way, the box only mentioning Galaxian on the back cover and in the instruction manual. With Galaga on this cartridge there is no reason whatsoever to waste any time on it.

Lastly we have my favorite game in the collection Dig Dug. More of a surreal cult classic than a big hit, in Dig Dug you control a little miner armed only with what seems to be a bicycle pump. Digging through the dirt he has to eliminate all his enemies either by dropping boulders onto them or by pumping them until they explode. (You face the enemy and the "pump" the fire button.) Pookas (Red Goggled balloons) are fairly easy to deal with but Frygars (little green dragons) are trickier as they spout gushes of flame to the left and right. It all seems too easy but later levels contain more and



more enemies and fewer boulders. The impatient enemies will 'ghost' through walls to chase you. The screen scrolls slightly up and down to follow you but in this case the graphics are very clear, and you can see most of the playfield at any one time. This was the game that was inspiration to the ancient classic Boulderdash

Galaga has always been a simple game. You have a starship that can move left and right and can fire. Aliens swoop down in formations while gunning for you. Galaga

If you could have told me when I was a kid that I could play arcade perfect games at home I would have had problems believing you. And if you then showed me a handheld that contained five arcade games on a chip the

# Namco Museum

Donning his flares, afro wig and ludicrous over-sized sunglasses, **tssk** opens a packet of Spangles and gets himself down to the Namco Museum.

possible, and then compete against other racers in the circuit. Problems start with the control. Pole Position was designed to be played with a steering wheel and a digital D-Pad just doesn't give you the precision. It's all too easy to overcorrect your steering and slide around the course like a hockey puck on ice. It does have damage modeling though. Clip a billboard or a car and your car blows up, American explosion style. With more appealing racing games such as Mario Super Circuit there really isn't a reason except nostalgia to play this for more than five minutes.

I was really looking forward to revisiting Ms Pacman, my favourite Pacman game. I won't waste time explaining this, everyone here has played Pacman and this is really Pacman in drag with the addition of extra mazes to add some much-needed novelty to the routine. There are two options for displaying the playfield and both have their problems. Full screen mode is really, 1/3 screen. By keeping the mazes to their original aspect you end up with a tiny maze in the middle of the screen with black bars to the left and right of the playfield. You can see the entire maze like this but you'll end up with sore eyes if you play it this way for too long or under bad light. Scroll mode uses the whole screen to show you part of the playfield, the maze scrolls up and down to follow you. This fixes one problem but replaces it with another, you can't see the entire maze at once. This allows the ghosts to hide off screen. You can use the shoulder buttons to force scroll the screen up or down but this solution is less than ideal. Otherwise, its pretty much the same as the arcade game and still fun if you aren't sick of Pacman yet.



problem, why couldn't there have been an option to display the graphics on its side like its big brother on the PS1? It's a lot easier to tilt a Gameboy on its side than a



TV. Sure, it would be more difficult to hold but at least you'd have the choice. And Ms Pacman only needs the D-pad in any case.

More serious is the lack of a high score save. The old games were all about the high score, seeing your name up in lights in the number one slot. But here, when the GBA powers down your high scores drift off into the ether. You could write down your high scores in a little logbook but that seems sad. If old games such as Tetris DX can manage it then this can. The only reasons I can think of for the non-inclusion is laziness or economics.

If you really must play your old favourites on the train this compilation has a nice mix of genres. Classic gamers have probably bought this cartridge already, for others though this really is a curiosity piece only. Like heritage rock you'll probably need to have been there back in the day to appreciate it. New gamers will probably find these games too simple, preferring to sink their teeth into Advance Wars or Golden Sun. Two new games that have more depth and are cheaper than what is on offer here.

**3/5**

## Reviews



As is to be expected from a GT game, Concept places you behind the wheel of some of the worlds most expensive and unattainable cars. In this game, however, unattainable is really true - as hinted at in the title, GT Concept features some of the weirdest car designs you've

Instead of racing for money to soup up existing motors or buy new ones, cars are simply earned by good performance in licences, or winning races. A lot of the depth which has made GT such a popular series with petrolheads has been taken away in this game. You won't

# Gran Turismo Concept

## 2002 Tokyo-Geneva

**Michael Price** tries hard to write a review at least as long as the title of the game he's reviewing...

ever likely to see from top manufacturers around the globe, such as the insane Toyota Pod, which must be seen to be believed.

Disappointingly, there are only five tracks, plus their reverse equivalents. A very disappointing number compared to the track count of more recent games and indeed GT3 A-Spec itself. Tokyo R246, Midfield Raceway, Tahiti Maze and the Swiss Alps return from A-Spec, and Autumn Ring also makes a welcome return to the series.

Concept follows the standard GT structure of licences and races. Ten licence tests make up the "Course Licence" section. New cars are awarded for bronze and gold medals in these tests.



find any upgrades here - a few minor settings tweaks, certainly, but no new parts, and no money.

The bonuses are nice enough for those who persevere long enough to collect their reward. Unfortunately, "long enough" turns out to be not very long - anyone with a modicum of skill with Gran Turismo could probably cane this title over a weekend, if not a single day of concentrated play.

In conclusion, it's hard to find a solid reason to recommend Concept over it's older brother, which is cheaper and has far more depth. Unless you've won every trophy, owned every car and driven every square metre of track in A-Spec, I wouldn't bother with Concept.

**3/5**



# Seaman Diary (part 1)

Every once in a while there's a game that defies genre pigeon-holing. Or a game that is so mad that people are scared to buy it. Or a game so immersive that whole days of your life are spent not playing but living it. All of these things can describe the Dreamcast 'game' Seaman from Sega. A game where you look after and actually converse with bizarre fish creatures. It's like Little Computer People on acid.

**Rev. Owen Allaway** reveals his Seaman diary - a journal of his days with one of these unique digital creatures. He tries hard not to make any puns about England goalkeepers, or comments about the heights of male sexual excitement.

## Wednesday Evening

Get home from work to find Fed-Ex delivery notice stuck to my front door. Practically run to the apartment leasing office to pick up my package. Will it be Seaman...? Well, obviously. I really want to play it, but am due in the pub. Walk across the road to pub, still clutching my copy of Seaman. Sit at bar and open up packaging. Foam microphone covers drop to pub floor. I get strange looks. Mike the Barman asks what I've got. I tell him. He is thinking of buying a Dreamcast, but will probably wait for the PS2. The idea of Seaman has him intrigued. Wait for friends to turn up. Eventually one friend turns up. The others are in the office working late and will probably not make it. Slackers. Friend notices my box.

"You've got a present! What is it?"  
 "Seaman."  
 "Please get it off the table."



I explain. She, too, is intrigued by the concept. Three hours later I leave the pub. When I get home I have a choice. Go straight to bed or start playing Seaman and hope my Guinness-

clouded brain can cope with the strangeness. Seaman wins.

Spend a stupidly long time assembling the microphone and swapping VMUs round. Once everything is set up, I turn on the Dreamcast. Lots of copyright screens, followed by the dulcet tones of Leonard Nimoy. He introduces himself and talks a bit about Seaman. One thing that strikes me as odd is that he tells me to remember that the colour of the sea is blue. A clue?

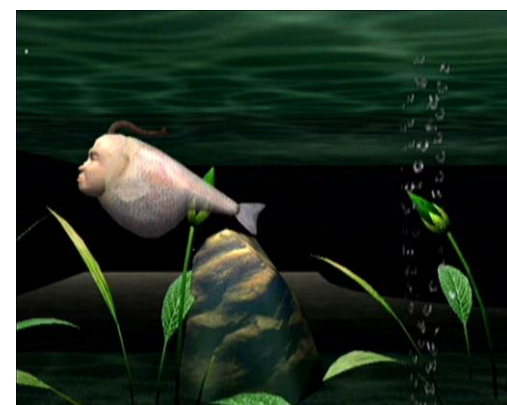
I am now looking at an tank, empty but for a few rocks and a shellfish. From the (p)reviews of the game I read, I seem to remember that the shellfish is called Natilus. I play around with the controls, zooming in and out. Find the controls to adjust air, heat and light. Increase the amount of air. At a certain point the numbers displaying the amount of air turn blue. I assume Mr. Nimoy was giving an unsubtle hint and leave the air on that setting. Same goes for heat. The light has three settings - off, dim and bright. I leave it dim.

Spend ages trying to pick up an egg on the inventory screen and drop it in the tank. Eventually I have to resort to the manual. I am careful only to look at the controls and try to avoid spoilers. Drop egg in tank. It bobs about in the water. Minutes pass... and then the egg is gone and eight little creatures are swimming around my tank. They look a lot like tadpoles. They swim around and sometimes fasten themselves to the edge of the tank. If I tap on the glass they lazily swim over to see what the fuss is

about.

I remember from a review that the Natilus is the key to evolving the creatures. But I know no more than that. So I tap on the glass near the Natilus. The tadpoles (mushroomers I believe they're officially called) swim over. After a few seconds there are only four mushroomers left in the tank. But I press on with my tactic. Now the Natilus does not eat the mushroomers. Instead, he sprays ink at them and runs away. Hurrah! Go my babies, harass the nasty creature that ate your siblings!

After a few more minutes the Natilus crawls out of its shell and lies on the



bottom of the tank. He starts spraying ink furiously. But some of this ink is red. He seems to be dying. Suddenly, four little creatures shoot out from the Natilus, which lies still and fades away.

I have Gillmen. Four of them. Tiny fish with human faces. They are actually quite cute in a creepy, "aaarghh run for your lives" type way. They come and investigate when I tap on the side



of the tank. They seem quicker and more inquisitive than the mushroomers, four of which are still swimming around. I drop some food into the tank. The Gillmen come over to investigate. The food does not last long. I save and go to bed.

## Thursday Morning

Turn on DC for a quick check before work. In his opening narration Leonard tells me I'm doing a great job and now have (DC spins noisily) four (DC spins noisily again) Gillmen in my tank. However they are cold and I should do something about it.

I raise the temperature and feed the little guys. I notice that once the food pellet is dropped two Seaman will come along and investigate (nibble on it?), but when the third comes along the pellet disappears. This leaves one Gillman who is definitely not getting any food. I mentally prepare myself for the inevitable heart-break to come.

My Gillmen are talking. Not real talk, but baby talk. Odd noises that almost sound like words. It's endearing. I resolve to learn how to use the microphone when I get back from work. Notice that my four remaining mushroomers have disappeared. I save and go to work.

## Thursday Evening

Get home from work to find all Seaman still alive. Tonight I will try talking to them. Decide to read the manual. There are no spoilers and a lot of useful information. I learn how to tickle and hypnotize my Gillmen. Tickle causes them to laugh and puts a big smile on their faces. Hypnotizing them causes them to float upside-down for a few seconds. It is funny.

My Seaman are not talking English yet. I'm trying talking to them. Sometimes I get an '!' icon on my VMU which means the Gillmen think they understand me, sometimes I get an '????' to indicate that they don't know what I said. Sometimes I get no icon at all, which I assume means they're not listening. Seem to get better results if I raise the pitch of my voice a bit.

After a few minutes of getting no intelligent response I switch to (bad) French. I get the '!' icon. I ask a Gillman if he speaks French. He looks at me and says, "I'm learning." Success! A real response. Ask another Gillman if he speaks English. "You first", is the reply. I believe I am starting to see the beginnings of the famed Seaman attitude. But I have also found out that my accent isn't a total barrier. It remains to be seen whether it will any sort of problem. Save the game and switch the DC off. I am back about an hour later.



Leonard tells me that I don't have to visit so much. Tap on the glass and the Gillmen swim over. I suddenly realize that they all have different faces. Similar, but not the same. One is especially different and I decide I'll be able to recognize him in the future. I name him Bob and spend a lot of time tickling and talking to him.

Before bed I come back for another quick visit. Leonard tells me that I seem to be becoming obsessed. And if there's anyone who knows about obsessives, it's Leonard Nimoy. Look for Bob. Realize that I can't tell him apart from the others after all. Am quite depressed. Turn out the lights in the tank, save and go to bed.

## Friday Morning

Get up and before I do anything else I wander into the living room. Feeding time. Gillmen still speaking baby talk. Ask one if he can speak English. "What's the point?" I have no answer. Notice that the Gillmen are not as unique as I thought - but if I bring them over to the side of the tank I do know which one Bob is. I seem to have a couple of identical twins. Rename Bob to Barney. The other unique Gillman is Peter. The other two

are The Other Two. I save the game and go to work.

On way to work realize that feeding my Gillmen at seven in the morning will not happen at weekends. They will have to go hungry. I am not getting up early at weekends to feed a video game. When I am away from Seaman I think of it as a game. When I am in front of the tank playing with the creatures and setting up their environment, they are living creatures to me. I find this slightly disturbing - but I still cannot wait to get home and see how the little chaps are getting on.

Lots happened over the weekend. It's difficult to remember everything, but I'll give it a go. The things Seaman says are mostly all paraphrased as I can't remember them exactly. As always, major spoilers follow.

## Friday Evening

My four Gillmen know some words. "Yes", "No", "Play", "Seaman", "baby". That kind of thing. I talk to them but don't get much of a response. Decide that I want to move from a morning feed to evening and therefore feed the Gillmen at about half one in the morning.

## Saturday Morning

Same as last night. I'm constantly trying new words, but the vocab seems very limited. From a post I made to another newsgroup on Saturday afternoon - "At this stage they seem to react to the first word that they hear and understand. Say "baby seaman" and it says "baby". Say "seaman baby" and it says "seaman". I've got a few more responses. If I say "friend" they always say either "fun" or "play". Same response with "Dreamcast". "Fish" is another word they know. In another context I mentioned "Wales" and it just turned to me and said a very emphatic "no". May have been coincidence, but I like to believe it was a real response - albeit due to a misunderstanding."

## Saturday Night

Get back from pub at about 2:30am. (I love Texan licensing laws.) Need to feed Seaman. My Seaman are talking - in sentences!

**The saga continues next issue**

# Letters

The first **ugvm** mailbag! Lets take a look at what rubbish our readers-to-be have sent us, eh? Or perhaps not, after having a quick glance...

## Not Murry Lochlan Young

Friday night  
by anonymous  
Its Friday night and my options are gaming, chilling or going to the bar

of course I pick gaming  
its the logical choice  
playing monkey target  
and raising my voice

Its Friday night  
with consoles galore  
PS2 Xbox and Gamecube  
Now Im ready for war

On goes Pro Evo  
Its two versus two  
score a goal watch the replay  
whilst changing the view

Its Friday night  
and the pizzas are ordered  
Everything 60hz  
nothing is bordered

the evening gets later  
my eyes get tired  
need something more  
to keep me wired

Its Friday night  
Im on Expert level seven  
just let me do this one  
and I'll be in heaven

Oh yes Ive done it  
with two seconds to spare  
at least this will keep me  
from tearing out my hair

Its Saturday Morning  
And time for bed  
Images of monkeys  
alive in my head.

Why do I do this?

Waste my precious weekends  
because I love it thats why, and so do  
my friends :-)

**Anonymous, via email**

*Erm. I don't think we should have printed this, to be honest, but since it's only our first issue, we took every letter we could. Now you'll have started a trend of The Streets-like poetic nonsense and we'll never get any letters worth publishing! See what you've done? You've ruined our reputation before we've even started. I hope you're happy. Ed.*

## When It's Ready!

When is the first issue of **ugvm** coming out? Is my review in it yet? When is it out? Have you done it yet?  
**Lister, every ten minutes on IRC**

*For the ten millionth time, Lister, when it's ready. Which, if you're reading this, is now. LEAVE ME ALONE! Ed.*

## Save Your Game Shop

When I was younger, buying Megadrive games, there were three specialist games shops on Orpington High Street. Now there are none. Whilst this doesn't matter to me (I work in central London!) it's something I've noticed all over the place. Smaller, independent shops are closing down, and Game/EB is taking over. This isn't a good thing. Buy from your local games shop! Even Gamestation, a growing chain of stores, is worthy competition to the Game/EB monolith. While it's nice for there to be a shop which is parent-friendly and drawing attention to the gaming industry, Game/EB is possible the worst place for a gamer to buy from, due to the ludicrously high prices and non-rewarding loyalty scheme. Competition is a good thing.

**Tim Miller, via internal email  
(ohwhatagiveaway)**

Good point, although my local game shop only sells pheasants and pigeons. I can't get them in EB, however. **Ed.**

# ugvm needs YOU!

**ugvm** is written by the people, for the people. It can only succeed if you make it happen. We need you, yes, you too - the one with the cream-and-green tanktop.

You can help us by providing. Providing articles. Reviews. Features. Comments. Letters. Suggestions. Piles of cash. New hardware. Hard drugs. Etc. Etc.

The magazine is what you make it. If you send it in, we can turn it into legend\*.

Here's what you do. Type up your submission, and send it to [editor@ugvm.org.uk](mailto:editor@ugvm.org.uk). Make sure it's all in plain text (so Notepad or Simpletext are good choices to type it into). If you're doing a review, then multiples of about 200 words is great. If it's a letter, mark the subject of the email as Letters.

All fairly obvious really. The only thing we ask, and this is a legal thing and so quite important, is that the work is your own, and you are not just cut-and-pasting some review or article from another website or magazine.

As always, we the **ugvm** staff can be found in the newsgroup [uk.games.video.misc](mailto:uk.games.video.misc), so you're free to talk to us there.

Please give generously.

\* Legend status is not a constant, and fame value can go down as well as up. Your statutory rights are not affected. Your home is at risk if you do not keep up repayments. May contain nuts.

Send your letters to [editor@ugvm.org.uk](mailto:editor@ugvm.org.uk)

## Hold The Back Page

It has to be said, that I am addicted to games. I have been for almost 20 years, and have become more and more picky over that time as to what is good, and what is bad. Is it because I now have to buy the games myself out of my own wallet, rather than my parents purchasing them for me? Is it because they're more expensive now than they used to be, and so more money is wasted on a real stinker of a game?

For the most part, no. I put it down to two main reasons. When I was 7, any game at all could keep me entertained for hours. It didn't matter if it was good or bad, I enjoyed almost all of them, probably in the same way as when you give a kid a present at christmas and they'll even enjoy playing with the box it came in. I had no expectations then. The other reason now is time. I simply do not have the amount of time to play games now that I had when I was a child. My work day is longer than my school day was, and now I have other commitments besides playing with my friends. So

when I want a game to play, I don't want to waste my time on some rubbish.

Games of today may have better graphics, and sound, but we all know that gameplay is what is important. And gameplay is what will keep me glued to a game in what free time I have, not fancy graphics and orchestral soundtracks. Not hour long FMV sequences. All these things are a bonus, yes, but not all that important for a truly great game.

Keep playing the games with gameplay. Help promote good, solid and original games. Let the games companies know that we won't stand for gloss-over-game titles by not buying crap games. They need to keep working hard at what they do, or we'll all just up and leave.

**deKay**

## Next Month in ugvm

# Halo

We furnish you with a review of the best Xbox game so far!



# Videogames: A Rough Guide

A quick-start feature of getting into videogames - become an instant expert!

# Seaman Diary

More underwater adventures, courtesy of The Rev.

## Plus:

More reviews of games new and old

Another machine gets the This Is Your Life treatment

Anything else you lot want to send in!

## The other ugvm

Whilst waiting for the next issue of **ugvm**, why not check out the news group [uk.games.video.misc](http://uk.games.video.misc), if you don't subscribe to it already? To access it, you'll need a News Reader (such as Agent or Xnews). Remember never to top-post, and try to snip your replies so they're not too long.

Your best bet is to "lurk" (that is, read the posts but don't post anything) for a few days until you get the feel for the place. If you're not sure what to do, just ask the regulars - many of whom have constructed this very magazine, so you'll recognise a few names.